

identification of the bird, which I handled in the flesh; it was in good condition, and turned the scales at 2 lb. 4 ozs. It is in the plumage of youth, but is in "change," and corresponds, in fact, to the appearance which was presented, in the same month, by a male *Faligula rufna* bred in the Gardens of the Zoological Society in 1886. It would therefore appear to be a little more than four months old.

Yours, &c.,

H. A. MACPHERSON.

Allonby Vicarage, Cumberland  
October 16th, 1897.

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SIRS,—Permit me to say, with regard to your note on the way I spell the name of the British Creeper, viz., *Certhia f. britannica*\* (Ibis, 1897, p. 615), that it is not the same to spell that name and the word Britain with two t's. It is not necessary to suppose that I wish the Editors of 'The Ibis,' or any one else, to spell Britain with two t's, but I am justified in spelling the name "*britannica*" as the author of that term originally spelt it, especially since in all, or at least nearly all old Roman manuscripts, the name of this country is spelt "Brittania" (*sic*), and the classical spelling of the name is therefore with two t's, in spite of our modern way of writing it. It is, therefore, I think, evident that Ridgway purposely spelt the name of the British Creeper with two t's and one n, and that it should be so written by us, although we all write Britain with one t.

Yours &c.,

ERNST HARTERT.

Tring, November, 1897.

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*The Bird-Collections of the British Museum.*—The Parliamentary Report of the British Museum was issued too late last year to allow us to notice it in our October number. We now transcribe the most important portions relating to the collection of Birds:—

"Considerable progress has been made during the year with the registration and incorporation of recent accessions. The

\* Not "*britannica*," as you quote my spelling!—E. H.

whole of the Steere collection of Philippine birds has been incorporated, and much of the Seebohm collection has been registered.

“The Seebohm bequest consists mainly of Palæarctic birds, including as it does the results of the many travels of its late owner in Siberia and various parts of Europe. This additional material has supplied a great want in the Museum, which was previously very deficient in specimens from the Palæarctic Region. In addition to these much-desired supplements to the Collection of Birds, the Seebohm bequest contains a fine series of Japanese and Chinese species, the latter embracing all the Passerine birds of the Swinhoe collection. The larger specimens from the latter, such as Birds of Prey, Cormorants, Herons, Wading-birds, &c., had been given by Mr. Seebohm to the Museum during his lifetime. The series of Pheasants and Thrushes, of which Mr. Seebohm had made a special study, are among the finest in the world.

“The additions to the series of birds in 1896 were 21,900 in number, of which 16,950 were derived from the Seebohm bequest. The principal smaller acquisitions were as follows:—

“A Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaëtus*), from Sutherlandshire; presented by Mr. G. T. Stibbard. 22 Geese, Ducks, and Wading-birds from Holland; presented by Messrs. T. M. Pike and H. L. Popham, Esqs. 66 specimens of Eider Ducks (*Somateria mollissima*) and Black Guillemots (*Uria grylle*), illustrating the changes of plumage; from North Norway; purchased. A skeleton of the Dalmatian Pelican (*Pelecanus crispus*); presented by the Director of Kew Gardens. 8 birds from Nyasaland, including the type of a new Francolin (*Francolinus crawshayi*); presented by Mr. Richard Crawshay. 37 birds from Nyasaland; presented by Consul Alfred Sharpe. 72 specimens of birds from Nyasaland, including the types of the new species *Oriolus chlorocephalus*, *Cryptospiza australis*, and *Criniger olivaceiceps*; presented by Sir H. H. Johnston, K.C.B. 35 specimens from Lake Albert Edward district, Uganda; presented by Mr. G. F. Scott Elliot. 31 birds from Machakos, East

Africa, including the types of two new species (*Cisticola hindii* and *Serinus fagani*); presented by Dr. Hinde. 21 specimens of birds from Matabeleland; presented by Mr. F. C. Selous. A rare Pigeon (*Haplopelia principalis*) from West Africa, new to the collection, presented by the Committee of the Owens College, Manchester. 35 birds from Mashonaland; presented by Mr. Guy A. K. Marshall. 96 birds from Somaliland; purchased. The Steere collection of Philippine birds, being the series of skins obtained by Professor J. B. Steere during his expedition to the Philippine Archipelago: this collection, numbering 1640 specimens, containing 44 types, and examples of 15 species new to the collection, was purchased. A young Bligh's Whistling Thrush (*Myiophonus blighi*), with the nest and eggs, from Ceylon; presented by Mr. E. W. Antram. Two small collections of birds from the mountains of South-eastern New Guinea, containing examples of *Paradisornis rudolphi* and of other species new to the collection, and including the types of *Oreopsittacus grandis* and *Melipotés atriceps*; purchased. 17 birds from Persia; presented by Mr. F. Gillett. A pair of *Sitta magna*, the Great Nuthatch of Burma; presented by Major Rippon. 32 birds from the Celebean Archipelago, containing examples of 11 species new to the collection; purchased. 11 Birds of Paradise from Mount Victoria, British New Guinea; purchased. An egg of the Red-breasted Goose (*Bernicla ruficollis*) from the Yenisei River; presented by Mr. H. L. Popham. Nests and parent-birds of a Sun-bird (*Æthopyga magnifica*) and of a Flower-pecker (*Dicaeum hamatostictum*) from the Island of Negros; presented by Mr. John Whitehead. Immature specimens of *Arboricola erythrophrys* and *Hæmatortyx sanguiniceps* from Kina Balu; presented by Mr. A. H. Everett. 72 birds from Borneo and Celebes, collected by Mr. A. H. Everett, and comprising examples of 6 species new to the collection; purchased. A pair of *Alcippe davidi* from Ichang, China; presented by Mr. F. W. Styan. 49 specimens from the Marianne Islands, including examples of 9 species new to the collection; received in exchange from the Hon. Walter

Rothschild. An egg of the White-winged Trumpeter (*Psophia leucoptera*); presented by Mr. F. E. Blaauw. Two males of Anderson's Silver Pheasant (*Gemmæus andersoni*) from the Ruby Mines, Burma; presented by Mr. E. W. Oates. 41 specimens from Luzon, Philippine Islands, collected by Mr. John Whitehead, and containing examples of 18 species new to the collection; purchased. A pair of the Luzon Flower-peeker (*Dicaeum pygmæum*), with nest; presented by Mr. John Whitehead. A pair of Hodgson's Partridge (*Perdix hodgsoniæ*) from Thibet; presented by Mr. St. George Littledale. 45 birds from Andros Island, Bahamas; presented by Mr. Neville Chamberlain. 105 Humming-birds from Ecuador, including examples of two species new to the collection; presented by the Hon. Walter Rothschild. 18 birds from Chili, including the types of *Phrygilus coracinus*; presented by Mrs. Berkeley James. A collection of 420 birds from British Guiana; presented by Messrs. J. J. Quelch and F. V. McConnell. Four Petrels from the Kermadec Islands; presented by Professor F. W. Hutton, F.R.S. 39 Australian birds in spirit; presented by Mr. C. Burton."

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*The Dobroyde Collection of Australian Birds.*—The Report of the Trustees of the Australian Museum, Sydney, to the Legislative Assembly of New South Wales for 1896, announces that the Government has purchased and presented to the Museum the "Dobroyde" Collection of Australian Birds and Eggs formed by Messrs. Ramsay, and containing many of the types described by Dr. E. P. Ramsay, the well-known Australian ornithologist, lately Curator of the Museum. The present Curator is Mr. R. Etheridge, Jr. Mr. Alfred J. North, who is in charge of the Birds, will, we trust, prepare a catalogue of the Dobroyde Collection, which will be very useful to ornithologists.

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*The Great Auk in Ireland.*—The occurrence of the remains of the Great Auk (*Atca impennis*) in Ireland has been already recorded from specimens obtained by